Early Childhood Education Advocacy Toolkit

Advocacy—Where to start?

You wouldn’t have gotten this far without believing it is necessary to educate more people about the importance of early childhood education in Idaho, but it might be intimidating to jump into the “political” process. Many nonprofits, agencies and groups that receive federal funding are afraid they’ll run afoul of lobbying laws if they engage too exuberantly in public debate, but this toolkit will help you educate and inform without fear of overstepping your bounds and provide you with tools and tips to elevate your efforts.

You already have all the knowledge you need to be a strong advocate. This toolkit will help you refine your ability to share information with policymakers and have a positive impact on Idahoan kids.

Early Childhood in Idaho

Your advocacy is critical to improve quality and access to early childhood education in Idaho. As you know already, Idaho is one of only four states that do not fund preschool. At the same time, the average cost of private child care/preschool for a 4-year-old is $6,430 per year.

This means that for most parents, programs are too expensive, and access is limited. As a result, 68% of 3- and 4-year-olds in Idaho are NOT enrolled in preschool.

The good news is that a majority of Idahoans agree that the state should be doing more, that preschool is important, and that state funding would result in direct returns to our communities. This means there is a tremendous opportunity for improvement in Idaho when it comes to early childhood education.

What Can We Do? Act Now— the Idaho Way.

Never forget—You are the experts! You have a role to play to ensure your policymakers understand the importance of investing in high-quality early childhood education and understand they can make a difference in the lives of Idaho’s children and families.

Policymakers need to hear from you to inform their decisions, and communities need help focusing their efforts to help children.

EARLY LEARNING MATTERS: FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

► 90% of brain development occurs as early as age 5.
► 51% of Idaho’s children begin kindergarten with grade-level reading skills.
► Children who start kindergarten behind their peers are more likely to stay behind, form the largest group of dropouts, and have less than a 12% chance of attending a four-year university.
► Every $1 invested in high-quality early childhood education can generate between $8 and $17 in economic returns.
The goal is to ensure that all families in Idaho have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs, regardless of their income or zip code. For that to happen, we need to:

► **Build and strengthen community and public support for creating local early learning collaboratives, so all Idaho’s children have quality early learning programs.** *(Think about hosting a forum that includes local businesses in your area to talk about how the lack of early learning programs impacts both children and working parents—and invite your local paper to cover it.)*

► **Increase understanding about what high-quality early education looks like.** A variety of early learning organizations have come together to promote the importance of early learning and healthy childhoods for the future development of Idaho’s children. *(Invite a state legislator to tour a high-quality child care center.)*

► **Become familiar with early learning legislation.** As an early childhood professional, it is your role to know and understand proposed legislation and what it will do. Even if you never ask a policymaker to vote a particular way on the legislation, you can help answer questions about its impact on you and the children and families you serve.

► **Build partnerships with others in your community to support early childhood professionals.** Establish small business collaboration with child care resource and referral programs to assist small child care businesses in employee retention, stability and strengthening family programs.

**The Basics: Local versus State versus Federal Advocacy**

Advocacy can happen at all levels of government – federal, state and local. Often the media emphasizes federal advocacy, but the decisions that most directly impact you and your family occur at the state and local level. That’s why it’s important to think about the most appropriate and effective use of your limited and precious advocacy hours.

**Federal—Congress**

► Consists of House of Representatives and Senate.

► Oversees federal spending programs, usually working in billions of dollars.

► Heavy amounts of direct and indirect advocacy directed towards members both regionally and nationally.

**State—Idaho State Legislature**

► Consists of Idaho Senate and Idaho House of Representatives, elected every two years.

► Oversees state spending, meets annually from mid-January through mid-March, usually.

► Closer to local communities, easier to educate on issues of state/local importance.

**Local—City, Village, County, Regional Government**

► Varies depending on exact location, could have several layers.

► Oversees all local spending, smaller budgets.

► Easiest to directly advocate; the policymakers are probably neighbors, people you see at the grocery store.
How to Use this Toolkit

In Advocacy 101 you’ll find an “advocacy starter kit” that will provide everything you need to advocate, including:

► The difference between advocacy and lobbying, and examples of each that you can use (Spoiler: for something to be considered lobbying, it must be done to influence legislation. Building community support generally for early learning is advocacy!)
► How to identify your target audience AND make sure you have a strong clear message that will resonate.
► Tips for engaging with policymakers, pros and cons of different methods, and all the tools you’ll need to have an effective and meaningful encounter.
► Information for using social media to your advantage.
► An Advocacy Glossary that will have you sounding like an expert.

ADVOCACY 101

Advocacy 101 includes the following sections:

1. Why Should You Care About Advocacy?
2. Definitions and Examples of Advocacy
3. Identify Target Audiences for Advocacy
4. How to Communicate Directly with Policymakers
   a. Message Delivery Methods: Pros and Cons
   b. Tips for Engaging Policymakers
   c. How to Get Started
4. Using Social Media
5. Tips to Develop a Clear Message
6. Advocacy Glossary

Why Should You Care About Advocacy?

Public policies at the national, state and local levels have a tremendous impact on ensuring all families have access to high-quality early childhood education experiences and early childhood professionals are supported. The best way to educate and inform those responsible for creating and implementing those policies is through advocacy.

It can be challenging to find the time and confidence to engage in advocacy. Your role gives you a view of the most important concerns facing early learning AND the knowledge of how the system operates now and could be improved. If you don’t advocate for Idaho’s children, who will?

Definitions and Examples of Advocacy

All nonprofit organizations can advocate for the issues they care about. It’s important to understand what types of advocacy to use and what it looks like, so you can influence and inform like a pro without fear of overstepping your bounds.

Advocacy is an umbrella term, and involves identifying, embracing and promoting a cause. Lobbying is a specifically focused form of advocacy, with the purpose to influence specific legislation.

All lobbying is advocacy, but not all advocacy is lobbying!
Different kinds of advocacy: Direct and Indirect

Direct Advocacy—Legislative and Administrative
Direct Advocacy is when you personally share your messages with a policymaker to inform their views. It can be accomplished at the legislative level or with state/local government agencies in charge of administering programs.

Legislative Advocacy:
What this looks like: Working with elected officials to educate them about policies or programs, inform them of the impact of the program in their home district, and suggest policies that would benefit the community. Legislative advocacy activities can also include lobbying on specific bills or requested funding levels.

Example Strategies
► Communicate with legislators and staff through letters, e-mails, phone calls, or personal visits.
► Testify before relevant legislative Committees.
► Work with legislators to compel agency administrators to adopt your proposal.
► Meet with staff of the governor’s office and the legislature to draw attention to early childhood.

Administrative Advocacy:
What this looks like: Creating new policies, revising guidelines and resolving program problems through activities directed at administrative and governmental agencies with authority and discretion to change rules and regulations. Many decisions are made informally, so interacting with the managing entity rather than working through the legislature can be the most effective way to make a positive change.

Example Strategies
► Develop ongoing relationships with advocates and agency staff to influence decision making.
► Participate in forums where decisions are made.
► Provide reliable information about the impact of policy decisions in your community, agency, or program to build your credibility.

Indirect Advocacy—Media and Grassroots
Indirect Advocacy is when you share information with or organize others to inform a policymaker’s position.

Media Advocacy:
What this looks like: Using media to increase public awareness and influence broader public debate about early childhood issues. Keeping early childhood in the news creates public recognition and support, thereby increasing its practical and political importance.

Example Strategies
► Express your point of view through letters to the editor and call-in opportunities.
► Identify families or other impacted organizations and ask them to write letters or make calls as well.
► Share pertinent local media coverage with elected officials from your community.

Want to Do Advanced Media Advocacy?
► Contact local reporters when your organization has news to share (e.g., increase/decrease in state funding or human-interest story about a family.)
► Contact local radio and television stations about appearing on local talk shows or public affairs programs to share your expertise.
► Meet with the editorial board of newspapers.
► Be active on social media platforms pertinent to early childhood. Check out the “Leverage Social Media” section on pages 10–11 for tips on successful social media engagement.

**Grassroots Advocacy**

*What this looks like:* Encouraging the targeted audiences to contact legislators or policy makers via phone calls, emails, letters, postcards or via public events to express support for a particular issue. By illustrating the strength of support for your cause it helps policymakers understand its importance to the community at large. If you ask supporters to contact their elected officials to vote a specific way on a specific piece of legislation, it becomes lobbying.

**Example Strategies**

► Host an “advocacy day” when a large group of your members all meet with policymakers—usually legislators.

► Create a postcard campaign where supporters can personalize and send pre-made postcards to their legislators.

► Host a rally/public forum to share personal stories of how the issue has affected members of the public, and to garner earned media attention.

**Identify Target Audiences for Advocacy**

Along with the different types of advocacy, there are different audiences, and it’s important to understand whom you are trying to reach. For direct advocacy to a policymaker, this could include your state legislator, critical decision maker at the department of education, board of education, or a local leader such as a mayor or superintendent. If you are thinking about indirect advocacy, you might identify and target others with influence to ask them to be a messenger. To help discern where to direct your advocacy, work through these questions:

► **Who are the decision makers on early childhood education in Idaho?** It could be a legislator, or cabinet director, but is just as likely to be a staff member, program director or local county official. Think about this from a local and state perspective. You can look up your state legislators here: [https://legislature.idaho.gov/legislators/whosmylegislator/](https://legislature.idaho.gov/legislators/whosmylegislator/).

► **Who has influence over these decision makers?** Are there particular staff members they trust? Are they members of any associations? Who do they listen to and trust in their own community? Knowing more about their history and background can help you find messengers that can reinforce your talking points. *This is one of the first steps to doing grassroots advocacy and also identifying the best messenger for your direct advocacy.*

► **Where can I leverage my existing relationships and networks to ensure decision makers hear my message?** Other members of your organization or your board should share your message too. And don’t forget sister organizations that are part of any association to which you belong. If you are a member of a preschool collaborative, think about all of the stakeholders who are involved and may have influence.

► **Are there organizations or individuals that are not yet in my network, with whom I could build relationships to further my message?** Be creative and think broadly about the unlikely messengers who may share your goals, even if they do not directly work on early childhood. Reach out to the business community or the faith-based organizations in your area to share your message and ask them to help share your message to decision makers.
How to Communicate Directly with Policymakers

Once you identify your target audience for advocacy, you can decide on the best method and format for beginning your advocacy. It will help to answer some preliminary questions before beginning your advocacy efforts.

► Do I need to establish trust with my audiences?
  • Think strategically about your organization’s priorities and natural allies that share those priorities. Do you have a relationship with them already, or do you need to build one?
  • What does my target audience already know? How do they perceive the issue?
  • Are any of the policymakers that are natural allies who are supportive of early childhood? Additionally, who are the policymakers that have the most interest and control over your area of interest. If you don’t have a relationship with these policymakers already, how can you build one?
  • Are there policymakers that may be opponents with whom it would build beneficial bridges?

► Which type of advocacy—direct or indirect—will be most effective with my intended audiences?
  • Direct advocacy can have an immediate impact since it puts you in close contact with the policymaker, but may need the support of indirect advocacy to reinforce the message.
  • Indirect advocacy can build support over time and can utilize unexpected or unlikely messengers through methods such as asking them to write a letter to the editor or asking for their participation in grassroots events.

► What will be the most effective method to convey the relevant information to my audience?
  • Research how your intended audience communicates with the world and mimic their methods. Do they use a newsletter? Facebook page? District office hours? Meet them where they are already open to communication. See the chart on page 7 for the pros/cons of different methods and page 8 for additional examples and tips.
  • Policymakers have a lot going on. The more succinct and memorable your information, whether delivered verbally, in a meeting or digitally, the better your chance of being memorable. Use available tools in the next section to create, clarify and hone your message.
## Message Delivery Methods: Pros and Cons

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<th>Method</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face meetings</td>
<td>Ability to respond to any questions and receive feedback immediately; helpful for relationship building; ensures information finds its way into the policymaker’s hands; effective in conveying nuance and anecdotes.</td>
<td>Can be difficult to schedule; policymaker may be distracted by other events that day; can be a high-pressure situation; requires intensive preparation and follow-up for maximized impact.</td>
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<td>Phone call</td>
<td>Easier to schedule than a face-to-face meeting; receive feedback directly during the conversation; participants from multiple locations may attend without travelling.</td>
<td>Policymaker may not be fully focused on the call; technical challenges can create barriers.</td>
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<td>Site visit (visit to location to show policymaker a program or service in action)</td>
<td>High impact demonstration of your program/issue; opportunity to utilize multiple messengers; usually a longer time spent with the policymakers.</td>
<td>Difficult to schedule; requires intensive preparation for multiple people/groups; it may be difficult to keep all messengers on point the entire time.</td>
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<td>Letter</td>
<td>Ability to revise until message is exactly what you want; can be used to reach many policymakers at once; a good method to utilize unlikely messengers as signatories.</td>
<td>There is no guarantee a letter will reach the policymaker directly; low impact as office receives so much mail; difficult to gather feedback about policymaker thoughts on the issue.</td>
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<td>Email</td>
<td>Can be used at any time to reach large groups of people; easy to share template with allies; can be used to respond quickly to developing situations.</td>
<td>This is no guarantee it will reach the policymaker directly; low impact as offices receive so much email; difficult to gather feedback about policymaker thoughts on the issue.</td>
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<td>District forum (hold a group meeting to provide the policymaker with a broad spectrum of views and give them a chance to ask questions)</td>
<td>Offers in-depth session on early childhood issues; can be used to reach multiple policymakers at once; opportunity for earned media.</td>
<td>Difficult to control the message from all of the messengers; lots of planning and follow-up.</td>
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<td>Social media</td>
<td>Offers direct engagement with policymakers; available at any time; ability to use multiple messengers.</td>
<td>Can be difficult to always stay on message; chance of detractors jumping into the conversation.</td>
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Tips for Engaging Policymakers

General Tips

As you build these strong, personal relationships, it is important to remember that:

► Policymakers care about issues that affect their constituents and they respond to concise, persuasive arguments that are easily understood and communicated.
► Letters, emails and phone calls are effective ways to communicate. Five or six letters or phone calls on a specific issue will encourage the elected official to pay much closer attention to that issue. Personalized letters are always most effective.
► Don’t assume they have a level of knowledge about early childhood—begin with the basics and remember that you are the expert.
► Build a relationship with your elected official so you are seen as a resource for information on children’s issues and possible legislation.
► Legislators’ staff members are wonderful resource. Developing a good relationship with legislative staff can lead to direct contact with a legislator over time.

Phone Calls, Letters, and E-mails

Correspondence from constituents reminds elected officials that the public is tracking specific issues, legislation, and their voting records.

► Whenever communicating with policymakers through a phone call, letter or email:
  ► Identify yourself as a constituent (if you are one)
  ► Keep written correspondence to one page and phone calls to five minutes.
  ► When addressing a specific piece of legislation refer to the bill number.
  ► Include factual and, if possible, local information and examples that support your view points.
  ► Share stories about children and their families and how an issue affects them. It’s very effective at building support for your position.
  ► Include a call to action, specifying what you want the lawmaker to do.
  ► Practice with another person to identify any areas where your message isn’t clear or effective.

In-Person Meetings

Meetings, when properly prepped, can be a very effective use of time for both you and the policymaker. To be successful, use the following key tips.

► Be Prepared
  • When scheduling with the policymaker or staff, be polite, professional and prompt. They are forming first impressions during this process.
  • Do your homework. Research basic information about the policymakers. Do they have a personal history with early childhood issues? What’s their voting record related to your priorities?
  • Identify who will attend the meeting, what their role will be and what they should be prepared to discuss.
• Create or identify a ONE PAGE leave-behind, not a folder of information about your organization. Make sure it contains your main points and has your contact information. Make it compelling. Bring more copies than you think you’ll need.

▶ During the Meeting
• Deliver your message with confidence. Although the person you’re meeting with may hold considerable power, you are the expert in the room.

• Don’t assume the policymakers or their staff have a base level of understanding. Begin with the basics. You know more than they do, and you’re there to help educate them.

• Staff is valuable. It’s not unusual for a policymaker to send staff to a meeting in his or her place. Keep in mind that staff members pay close attention and carefully relay your information to their bosses.

• Remember your key points. Be succinct, direct and prepared to answer questions. If you don’t have an answer to a question, say so, then offer to get back with an answer within a specified time frame.

▶ Follow-up is the Key to Success
• Provide follow up information or materials quickly. Send a personal thank you note to everyone from the policymaker’s staff that attended the meeting and thank the staffer who arranged the meeting for you.

• Try to identify three opportunities to make contact in the next few weeks or months to keep you and early childhood issues on the policymaker’s radar.

• Provide information, updates and feedback to the policymaker’s office regularly, send emails and follow up with phone calls, chose emails subject lines that stand out, and craft letters to include key information in a compelling way within the first paragraph.

How to Get Started
Remember, advocacy isn’t just about having a one and done meeting with policymakers. It is most effective when you build a relationship. Become a familiar face and name. Both direct and indirect advocacy can pay big dividends, and it doesn’t need to be a full-time job. You can have a strong impact making your case in just one hour a week. Below are 10 easy ways to begin your advocacy.

1. Create your contact list. Make outreach easy by adding your target audience to your contact list. If you don’t have one already, create a mailing list to easily send out updates or issue-specific newsletters.

2. Introduce yourself. Whether it is to staff or the policymaker directly, ask for a meeting, or better yet, find others who know them to make an introduction. Attend an event. Attending events where the policymaker is present or inviting them to your events can help you become a familiar face.
3. Write a letter. A quick personal letter to a key prospect or influential person can have huge impact. Whether it’s an introduction or a thank you, take a few minutes and build some new inroads.

4. Ask your co-workers for help. You may be surprised about the skills or interests you co-workers may be hiding. Ask for help brainstorming ways to reach out or just sealing envelopes. When you get the conversation going internally, you help build it externally.

5. Make one phone call. Just like a letter, a quick phone call to thank someone, extend a personal invitation to your event, make a new connection, or even ask a favor can pay big dividends down the road.

6. Take someone to lunch. Everyone has to eat. Why not use that time to talk about your organization with someone who could become a valuable supporter, ally or ambassador?

7. Share what you’ve learned with others. Spend a few minutes making copies of a helpful handout or sending a group email with helpful tips that your friends and colleagues can use. This small action can get people talking about your organization and help them spread your message further.

8. Tell a friend or family member one great thing about your organization. Practice makes perfect, and the more you share great messages about your organization with your friends and family, the easier it will be to do the same thing when you’re meeting with a potential donor or an elected official.

9. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper. Praise policymakers when they’ve involved themselves in policy that supports early childhood issues or identify and illustrate the issue on which you want them to take action.

10. Connect on social media. Every policymaker is on Facebook or Twitter these days. If your organization uses these vehicles, get connected to easily share research and updates about early childhood issues. See the tips in the Leverage Social Media on page 11 for additional tips.

**Leverage Social Media**

Social media is often a critical way to organize, inspire and collaborate with individuals from across the street or across the globe, and can be an important element of your communication and advocacy efforts. Most policymakers have social media accounts where they keep track of what is happening with their constituents. If your organization already has an account, link to theirs, so you stay on their radar. Social media can also help galvanize grassroots efforts and share information quickly across your network. Before you dive in, take your time thinking about where and who to engage. On page 11 are some common outreach objectives and how to use social media to achieve them.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Social Media Strategy</th>
<th>Examples of Social Media to Use</th>
<th>Key Tips</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grow supporters and move your</td>
<td>• Use social media to have an ongoing presence as a resource for information on early childhood.</td>
<td>Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram,</td>
<td>• Stay on message; use your core talking points to support your online activity.</td>
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<td>message</td>
<td>• Follow individuals or organizations to stay up to date on new information about early childhood.</td>
<td>Medium, Vimeo, Periscope, Snapchat, WordPress</td>
<td>• Tag appropriate individuals and organizations.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Post messages that are relevant to your followers and move early childhood into the forefront of discussions and make priority stakeholders think about early childhood issues.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reply to positive comments and questions to gain new supporters and deepen the conversation about early childhood issues.</td>
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<td>Cultivate and engage champions</td>
<td>• Share pictures, news, and event updates.</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn</td>
<td>• Do not engage in arguments within the platform.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Follow individuals or organizations you are seeking to engage as champions, including members of the media.</td>
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<td>Position your organization as an</td>
<td>• Publish articles or resources (as full articles or links).</td>
<td>LinkedIn, Medium, Facebook, Twitter, Wordpres</td>
<td>• Strategically tag appropriate individuals and organizations.</td>
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<td>expert</td>
<td>• Engage in conversations that allow you to demonstrate subject matter expertise, such as twitter chats with other experts.</td>
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<td>• Share posts from other individuals or organizations to build a coalition around early childhood.</td>
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<td>Get followers to take action</td>
<td>• Create and post a call to action with a timeline and measurable goals.</td>
<td>Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn,</td>
<td>• Reply to positive comments and questions to gain new connections, supporters and deepen the conversation about early childhood issues.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Post about an existing campaign or initiative within your organization and ask your followers to join.</td>
<td>YouTube, Vimeo, Periscope, Snapchat, WordPress</td>
<td>• You may reply to negative comments, using evidence, to debunk myths. Be careful not to get into arguments online.</td>
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<td>Tell a story, share successes,</td>
<td>• Include relevant photos or videos in all posts whenever possible.</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn,</td>
<td>• Stay positive, state the problem and the solution. Don’t attack individuals or organizations that oppose your mission.</td>
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<td>and give recognition</td>
<td>• Provide followers an inside look into your world using photos, audio, and/or video.</td>
<td>YouTube, Medium, Vimeo, Periscope, WordPress</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Share photos and videos of a successful campaign or initiative led by your organization.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use photos and videos to recognize and thank a champion or critical team member.</td>
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Tips to Develop a Clear Message

You know your audience and you have an idea of how you want to engage with a policymaker, but what are you going to say? Crafting a clear and concise message before any engagement will ensure consistency among all your messengers. Clarity makes it easier to remember for you and the policymaker.

It is important for your message to communicate who you are, what you do, why it matters and why people should care. Follow the four steps below to develop the basis of your message, which can be about a specific initiative or early childhood education more generally.

Step 1: What You Do—Write what your organization/initiative does.

State what you do using no more than 20 words that you can say in 20 seconds. Review it. Would someone who doesn’t know early childhood issues understand? If your grandma or brother wouldn’t understand it, try again.

Step 2: How You Do It—Write the ways you and your organization/initiative works to meet your mission.

This is your time to shine. Talk about the unique work you do. What is different about your work than the work other organizations do? What is your value? Keep it to fewer than 20 words that you can say it in 20 seconds and keep it wonky-free.

Step 3: Why It Matters—Think about your target audiences and why what you do matters to them.

You’re speaking to a local legislator. Or a parent. Or a business owner. Or a teacher. Why does this issue matter to them? Write down all of the ways the issue impacts them and the people they represent or serve. How does what your organization/initiative does affect children, parents, teachers, and your community in ways that this audience cares about? Use no more than 20 words that you can say in 20 seconds.

Step 4: Why Should Anyone Care? Bring it all together for someone who does not care about early childhood issues.

What’s at stake? What will happen if there’s no action? How does this impact the community? The economy? What are the outcomes for the people it serves? How does your work solve a problem? What is different because of what you do? What will be most persuasive for your audience? What information does your audience need to hear? What action do you want the audience to take? Keep it to 20 words or less, that you can say it in 20 seconds.
Remember to include the following in your messages:

1. **Call to action.** Your message should contain a clearly defined request for action, no matter the audience. Examples of such asks include:
   - Supporting a particular piece of legislation (Note: this counts as lobbying).
   - Signing onto a letter of support for a program.
   - Visiting a high-quality early childhood site.
   - Meeting with a group of parents interested in a longer conversation about early childhood education.
   - Asking a public official to talk about the importance of early childhood education at public events.
   - Asking others to contact their policymakers.

2. **Personal examples or scenarios to help make the issue memorable and authentic.** List them here or in a separate document and integrate them into your messages and/or talking points.

3. **Data to support your message.** Think about the type of data that will move your audience to action. Remember that local data is most relevant for policymakers. List the data points here and integrate them into your messages and/or talking points.

Once you have draft messages and a plan for sharing them, use a quick checklist to double check that you are on target and most effective in your communications.

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<tr>
<th>Do your messages…</th>
<th>If not…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relate back to your communication goals?</td>
<td>Revisit your communication goals and make sure your messages will resonate with your target audience and accomplish your objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use positive language?</td>
<td>Find the upside and make that your approach.</td>
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<td>State and problem and a solution, never one or the other?</td>
<td>Rephrase messages to include a solution. If you don’t have a solution to recommend, find another problem to address.</td>
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<td>Talk about results or outcomes not transactions or activities?</td>
<td>Envision the end result of your effort and connect your effort to results of your work.</td>
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<td>Meet people where they are?</td>
<td>Put yourself in the place of your audience member. What’s the most important from his or her perspective? Understand where the audience is coming from and their values and tie it to that.</td>
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<td>Relay a simple and clear idea? Get to the point and do not try to over-explain the issue.</td>
<td>Help your audience understand early childhood issues. Less is more. One compelling sentence always trumps a ho-hum paragraph.</td>
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Advocacy Glossary

Advocacy can mean different things to different people. Use this Advocacy Glossary to familiarize yourself with the general terms, so you can be more effective in your advocacy efforts.

► **Advocacy:** an umbrella term, and involved identifying, embracing and promoting a cause.

► **Lobbying:** a focused form of advocacy, with the purpose to influence legislation. Only some methods of advocacy are considered lobbying.

► **Issue Advocacy:** refers to an organization communicating its view on issues of social or economic concern that are related to the organization’s charitable purposes.

► **Communication:** a conversation (in person or by phone), letter, email, fax or other creative mechanism to convey a message.

► **Policymaker:** a member of a government department, legislature or other organization who is responsible for making new rules, laws, or program administration. This can include legislative staff, agency administrators, and governing committees.

► **Public:** anyone but a policymaker or member of an organization. Communications to an organization’s members are considered direct lobbying. For this purpose, a member is someone who has given more than a small amount of time or money to the organization.

► **Expresses a view about specific legislation:** a bill or resolution that has been introduced in a legislative body or proposed legislation such as identifying a problem and presenting a specific solution to the problem. Specific legislation includes budget appropriations and taxes, and attempts to influence the confirmation of judicial and executive branch nominees. Proposed legislation may qualify as specific legislation even if it has not yet been introduced, been written down, or even fully fleshed out. Specific legislation does not include rulemakings/promulgation of regulations, executive orders, litigation, or attempts to enforce existing laws.

► **Call to action:** a specific means of encouraging the communication’s recipient to take lobbying action. A call to action must comprise one of the following actions: 1. Tell the recipient to contact a legislator; 2. Provide information on how the recipient can contact his/her legislator, such as providing the phone number or address; 3. Provide a mechanism for enabling the recipient to contact his legislator, such as a postcard, petition or email form; or 4. Identify a legislator who will vote on the legislation as being opposed to or undecided about the organization’s view on the legislation, a member of a legislative committee who will vote on the legislation, or the recipient’s legislator.